

Department of Defense (DoD)
Civilian Personnel Management Service (CPMS)
Field Advisory Services - *FAS*
Classification Appeal Decision

DoD Decision:	Engineering Technician, GS-0802-09
Initial classification:	Engineering Technician, GS-0802-09
Organization:	Naval Submarine Base Public Works Department Public Works Production Division
Date:	July 26, 1996

INTRODUCTION

The Civilian Personnel Management Service received a position classification appeal from employees at the Naval Submarine Base Xxx. Appellants' positions are currently classified as Engineering Technician GS-802-09. Appellants have indicated they should be classified as GS-11.

The positions are assigned to the Public Works Department, Production Division, Facilities, Utilities, and Structures Branch. The purpose of the position is to perform engineering technician/Base Operating Services Contract (BOSC) for several installations responsible for monitoring and administering the installation services contract with . The contract includes, mechanical, electrical, grounds, custodial, utilities, maintenance, pest control and others. The appellant's reviews information to determine if the contractor is meeting the performance requirement, identifying deviations from the original contract, analyzing contractor claims for adjustment; and making the appropriate recommendation to management (contracting office) on any significant change. The positions have no authority to allow deviations, interfering with the Contractor's method of performance, or releasing source selection information to unauthorized personnel.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION:

In deciding this appeal, we considered information obtained from the following sources:

- a. Appellants' appeal package.
- b. Information submitted by the Human Resources Office.
- c. Telephone discussion with one of the appellants.
- d. Telephone audit with appellants' supervisor.
- e. Telephone discussion with HRO representative.

SERIES DETERMINATION

The appellant's do not contest the series or title of the position. This position performs duties which require engineering technician and contract administration skills and knowledge. The supervisor has indicated the engineering technician skills and knowledge are imperative to perform the duties in a satisfactory manner. The work performed by the appellant's meet the intent of the GS-802 series definition. We concur with the Human Resources Office. Therefore, the title and series are correct as Engineering Technician, GS-802-09.

GRADE LEVEL DETERMINATION:

The position classification standard for the Engineering Technician GS-802, dated June 1969, has two evaluation factors; (1) Nature of Assignment, and (2) Level of Responsibility. These factors are evaluated below:

NATURE OF ASSIGNMENT

This factor measures the elements of scope and technical complexity that make assignments more or less difficult to approach. The scope of assignments is influenced by the range and variety of subject matter involved. The technical complexity of assignments varies from those that involve the application of explicit and directly applicable rules, regulations, and procedures to those that present major problems in the identification and interpretation of such guidelines and precedents.

Engineering Technicians at the GS-09 level perform a variety of work relating to the area of specialization that requires the application of a considerable number of different basic but established methods, procedures, and techniques. Assignments usually involve independent responsibility for planning and conduct of a block of work which is a complete conventional project of relatively limited scope, or a portion of a larger and more diverse project. Assignments require study, analysis, and consideration of several possible courses of action, techniques, general layouts, or designs, and selection of the most appropriate. They generally require consideration of numerous precedents and some adaptation of previous plans or

techniques. Often changes or deviations must be made during progress of an assignment to incorporate additional factors requested after commencement of the project or to adjust findings and conclusions which could not be predicted accurately in the original plans. Technicians at this level review, analyze, and integrate details or phases of work performed by other groups or individuals outside their organizational unit. Assignments at this level require a understanding of the effect that recommendations made or other results may have on a system or process and its end-use application. Illustrative examples including preparing plans and cost estimates for construction or major modification of existing electrical distribution systems and interior wiring for light and power in a variety of small conventional buildings, such as residences, barracks, small shops and offices.

The appellant's position is comparable to the GS-09 level. Contracts administered include electrical, heating and air conditioning, structural, grounds, basic custodial and other WGI (preventive maintenance). The appellant's use sound judgment in pursuing such issues as contractor claims of discrepancies between work performed versus the statement of work in the contract. The appellant's applies engineering technician knowledge, contract administration knowledge and knowledge of standard methods for job estimating (Engineer Performance Standard/EPS). Guidelines used include the basic contract, and Department of Labor Laws.

The appealed position does not meet criteria at the GS-11 level which describe work of greater scope and complexity, e.g. assignments involve elaborate systems and facilities requiring a wide-ranging accommodations and the added requirement for creativity in developing design adaptations and new ways of accomplishing work; demonstrated ability to interpret, select, adapt, and apply many guidelines, precedents, and engineering principles and practices which relate to an area of specialization; and some knowledge of related scientific and engineering fields. Employees at this level are confronted with a variety of complex problems requiring considerable judgment to make sound engineering compromises and decisions and a continuing requirement for contact work. Ingenuity and creative thinking are required in devising new ways of accomplishing objectives, and in adapting existing equipment or current techniques to new uses, while lower level technicians receive assignments which are usually segments of work carried out by employees at the GS-11 level. Illustrative examples include: plan the approach and details and conduct various experimental projects to develop circuits or develop estimates for a variety of multi-use construction projects or to determine the nature and condition of existing facilities, and to determine what should be done to provide, improve, or restore service to the facility or perform technical review of contractor prepared designs and specifications for such systems. We find this factor is more compatible with the GS-09 criteria.

LEVEL OF RESPONSIBILITY

This factor evaluates the effect of various degrees of control over the work. It includes

consideration of the amount and kind of supervision received and extent to which guidelines are appropriate to and govern the conduct of the work.

At the GS-9 level, supervisors outline requirements, provide information on related work being accomplished, and furnish general instructions as to scope of objectives, priorities, and the like. The supervisor is available for advice if significant departures from standard engineering practices occur. The supervisor observes the work for progress and adherence to completion and cost schedules. Standard methods employed are seldom reviewed but review is made for adequacy and for conformance with established policies, precedents and sound engineering concepts. Work contacts are frequent and demanding.

The appellant's position meets the above criteria. The appellant's work under the general supervision of the Chief, Utilities Branch who assigns work and provides guidance. The appellant's perform work independently and keeps the supervisor and Contracting Officer advised of any controversial issues. Work is completed in accordance with established guidelines (i.e. checklist). The supervisor is available when deviations from standard practice are necessary. Work is reviewed for adequacy and conformance with policies and procedures.

The appealed positions is not comparable to the criteria at the GS-11 which describe technicians working with considerable freedom in planning and carrying out assignments of greater complexity than found in this position. Unusual or controversial problems, or policy questions arising in the course of a project, may be discussed with the supervisor but technical supervisory assistance is infrequently sought or required. We find that many of the unusual questions or significant problems with the must be discussed in detail with the Contracting Officer, customer, and the immediate supervisor. Thus, GS-09 is correct for this factor.

DECISION: ENGINEERING TECHNICIAN, GS-802-09